South Precinct Email Community Newsletter
March 10, 2008

Dear Community Friends:

Recent Burglary Arrests

This past week, an alert saw an unknown person going up to a neighbor's door and knocking several times. The unknown person then began peaking through the front windows to see if anyone was home. The person's activities were suspicious to the neighbors. They saw the suspect meet up with a group of 6-7 other individuals ad after a brief huddle, the suspects ran to the back of the residence one of them stayed out front as a lookout. The neighbors immediately called 911. They also called the homeowners to let them know someone was trying to break in to the property (neighbors had exchanged home, work and cell numbers in the event they needed to contact each other, especially in instances like this).

The neighbors stayed on the phone with the 911 operator, provided detailed accounts of what they saw, including the suspects trying to open several windows of the home and then attempting forced entry. Officers arrived on the scene before the suspects could gain entry. All the suspects fled. They were pursued and eventually caught. Other neighbors provided witness statements as the suspects fled through their yards. The neighbors who initially called 911 were able to positively identify the suspects as the ones who attempted to break in to the home. In all, six suspects were arrested, taken to Juvenile Detention and have charges pending for attempted burglary.

Neighborhood Safety - What You Can Do

In the above case, it was alert neighbors who saw something that didn't look right and didn't hesitate in calling 911 that led to these arrests. These arrests were not the result of proactive patrols or even just pure luck. The crime was foiled and arrests were made because of alert neighbors. Don't assume police know what is suspicious in your neighborhood. It is your neighborhood; only you really know what is normal and what is not. When you see something that doesn't look right, when you get a feeling of suspicious activity, tell each other and tell Police by calling 911. Keep an eye out for each other and be willing to get involved.

Our previous newsletter provided a number of home security tips and suggestions for protecting your personal property. Please refer to our February 11th edition for more details.

You've Had A Burglary And Reported It - Now What?

Officers responding to a burglary will look for evidence that will help identify the perpetrators of the crime and place them at the scene. Unfortunately, many burglary scenes are annotated "Nothing of evidentiary value." This means that in spite of officer efforts, nothing could be used to identify the perpetrators of the crime (i.e. no usable fingerprints, prints were smudged, the homeowners cleaned up the crime scene before officers arrived). Without evidence that identifies the perpetrator, and then actually *places* the perpetrator in the home at the time of the burglary, (such as witness statements) or an admission of guilt from the perpetrator (not likely), the chances of making an arrest and of successful prosecution are slim. At best, a case could be made for possession of stolen property, but even then, the person with the property would have to <u>admit</u> that they knew it was stolen, or it would have to be <u>proven</u> that the property in their possession was stolen. Other than an admission of guilt, it can be shown the property was stolen because it can be identified by:

- the engraved driver's license number;
- the inventory list with the item's description, model number and serial number and/or;
- by photos of the items with a general written description and approximate value).

A burglary case that meets certain solvability standards may be assigned to a detective for follow-up. Based on the detective's investigation, it is the *Prosecutor's Office* that determines if the burden of proof has been met to file charges against a suspect. Keep that in mind.

Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!
<u>Mark Solomon, South Precinct Crime Prevention Coordinator</u>